

1871-72

# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF THE

## TOWN OF CANTON,

For the Year ending February 24, 1872.

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BOSTON:

WILLIAM BENSE, PRINTER, 8 CONGRESS SQUARE,

1872.



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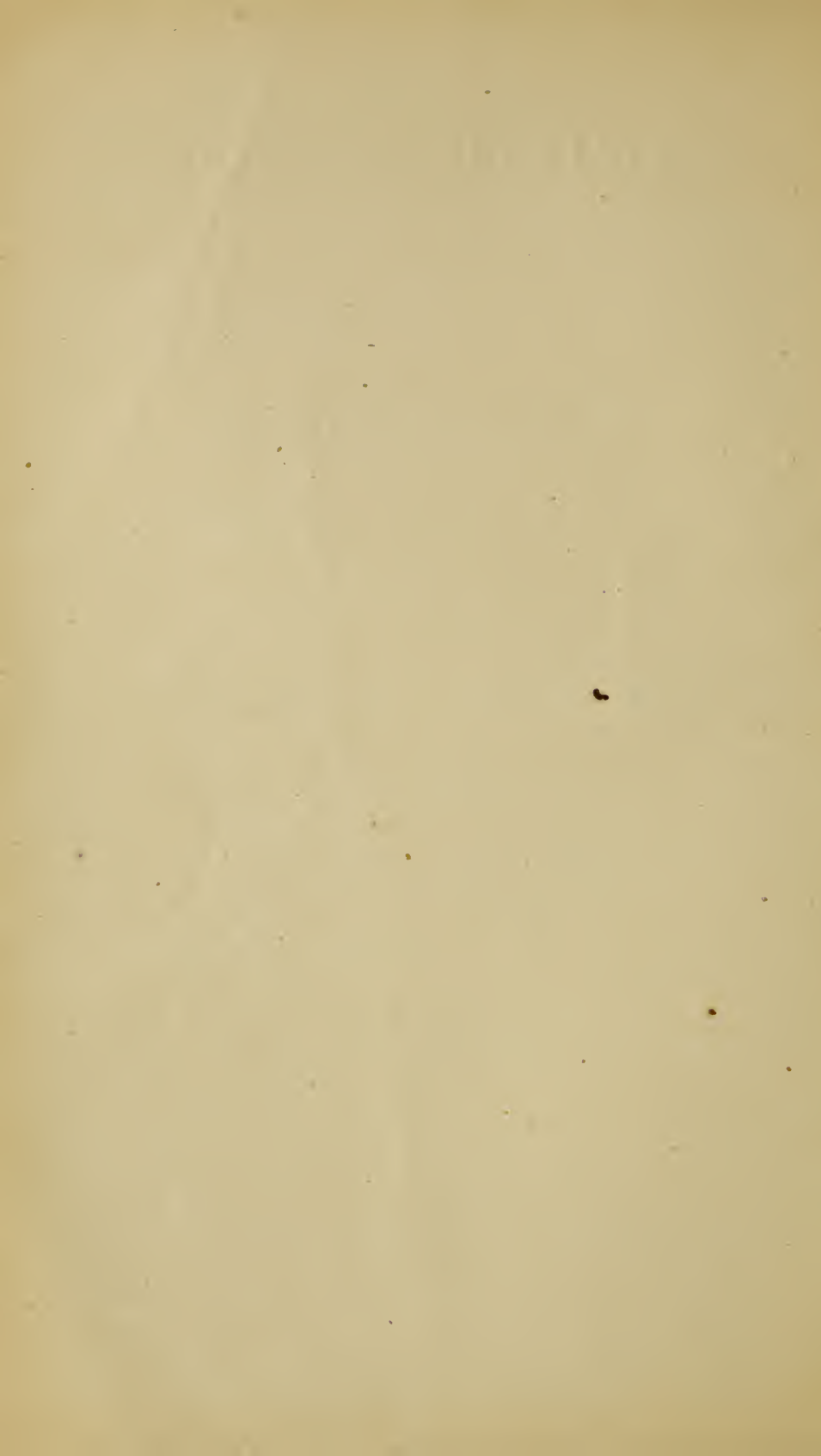
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## R E P O R T.

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THE Committee was organized April 3, 1871, as follows :  
J. MASON EVERETT, Chairman, WM. H. LITTLE, Secretary.

Committee on Text Books,—J. MASON EVERETT, E. CAPEN,  
and WM. H. LITTLE.

Sub-Committees:—

District No. 1, GEO. F. SUMNER.

“ “ 2, ISAAC HORTON.

“ “ 3, WM. H. LITTLE.

“ “ 4, JESSE FENNO.

“ “ 5, GEO. E. DOWNES.

“ “ 6, J. W. WATTLES.

“ “ 7, CHARLES ELLIS.

High School, J. MASON EVERETT.

THOMAS E. GROVER was chosen Superintendent of Schools,  
and E. Capen Agent for the sale of School-Books.

The amount appropriated by the Town for schools the past  
year was . . . . . \$8,000.00

Received from State ( School Fund;) . . . . . 287.07

“ “ County ( Dog Licenses,) . . . . . 418.82

Total, \$8,705.89

The Committee have expended for teaching, fuel  
and care of school-rooms, . . . . . 8,147.58

Balance unexpended, \$558.31

The amount appropriated by the Town for repairs and inci-  
dentals was . . . . . \$1,400.00

Add amount received for insurance on house in  
Dist. No. 6, damaged by fire, . . . . . 900.00

Total, \$2,300.00

Expended for repairs and incidentals during the  
year, . . . . . \$1,830.47

Balance unexpended, \$469.53

The amount appropriated by the Town for Evening Schools	
was . . . . .	\$500.00
Expended on Evening Schools, . . . . .	512.50

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Excess over appropriation,     \$12.50

The above unexpended balance of the school money, \$558.31 is the result of the fact that the past year, owing to a change in the arrangement of terms and vacations covered only 9½ months of school, instead of ten months, as usual—two weeks of school, which under the former arrangement would have formed part of last year, having been transferred to the year that has just begun. But for this fact the appropriation would hardly have proved sufficient.

One additional Primary School has been established in District No. 3 since our last annual report, increasing the number of schools in town to seventeen, and requiring eighteen teachers. The names of the teachers at present employed are as follows :

GEO. W. CAPEN,	DISTRICT No. 1, Grammar.
CHARLOTTE TUCKER,	“     “     1, Primary.
ELLEN McKENDRY,	“     “     2, Mixed.
MARIA T. DELANO, .	“     “     3, Grammar.
ALICE H. LOWREY,	“     “     3, Intermediate.
ELIZA A. FRENCH,	“     “     3, 1st. Primary.
LOUISE BRONSDON,	“     “     3, 2d. Primary.
LUCIE A. HALL,	“     “     3, 3d. Primary.
LUCY A. FRENCH,	“     “     3, 4th. Primary.
MARIELLA F. HOWES,	“     “     3, 5th. Primary.
S. JENNIE DEANE,	“     “     4, Mixed.
EMMA F. GOULD,	“     “     5, Mixed.
JEREMIAH E. EARLE.	“     “     6, Grammar.
E. FLORENCE FAUNCE,	“     “     6, Primary.
ABBY J. SNOW,	“     “     7, Intermediate
IDA GEORGE,	“     “     7, Primary.
J. F. CASEY, A. B.	High School,     Principal.
LYDIA J. PEARCE,	“     “     Assistant.

From an examination of this list, it may be seen that the Grammar School in District No. 3, has been placed in charge of a female teacher. This step was resolved upon by the Committee after careful deliberation, but not without some misgivings as to the ability of any female to maintain the requisite discipline, especially in view of the fact that the Regulations require that "the principals of the several grammar schools shall have jurisdiction over all the scholars belonging to their several buildings, so far as the preservation of order and good conduct in and about the school house is concerned." The results thus far have indicated that these fears were groundless, and though perhaps too early to speak definitely of the results of the change in other directions, we take pleasure in saying that they have been such as to strengthen our confidence in the wisdom of the change.

Irregular attendance continues to be a source of very great injury to our schools both Day and Evening. The committee have carefully considered this evil with a view to its abatement as far as possible. A vote was passed that scholars absent from school should, on rejoining their classes, make up the lessons passed over during their absence; and the Superintendent was requested to see this order, as well as the other regulations relative to absentees, strictly enforced. The result has been encouraging so far as it goes, though by no means entirely satisfactory. The Superintendent has been faithful and efficient in carrying out the wishes of the Committee, and in devising methods of his own to increase the average attendance. The High School and the Grammar School in No. 3, show a marked improvement in this respect, the per centage of the former during the last term being 96, and of the latter 90. There ought to be nothing to prevent these figures being reached by every school in town.

In accordance with an Act of the Legislature, adding Drawing to the list of studies required by law to be taught in our schools, that branch of education has been introduced. Laboring under the disadvantage of having very few teachers skilled in the teaching of drawing, the Committee furnished such facilities as they could to the teachers, to acquaint themselves with this art,



together with the best methods of teaching it. Of the success or failure of this plan they will be better prepared to speak another year.

On the afternoon of April 11, 1871, the school house in District No. 6 took fire under the floor of the second story, spread to the walls, and ran over a large portion of the building. By the vigorous exertion of the town's people the flames were subdued with only a partial damage to the building. The Committee with all possible despatch proceeded to make such temporary repairs as would enable the schools to go on in the building, and during the summer vacation it was put in thorough repair. The sum of \$900. was received by the town for insurance on the property, and has been credited above to the appropriation for repairs.

During the past year two of our teachers, Miss Cora H. Howes, and Miss Mary M. Blackman, have been removed by the hand of death. Both of these young ladies received most if not all their school education in Canton, and gave promise of usefulness in the calling they had chosen.

The Committee would call the attention of the citizens of the town to that portion of the Superintendent's report in which he speaks of the importance of an increased appropriation for our schools. They desire to add their own conviction of the necessity of such an increase, and to recommend to the town to raise the following sums:

For teaching, fuel and care of school-rooms of seventeen schools, . . . . .	\$9000.00
For repairs of houses and incidentals for schools, . . . . .	1250.00
For Evening Schools, . . . . .	500.00

For a further account of the condition, progress and needs of our public schools the Committee refer to the report of the Superintendent, hereto annexed.

J. MASON EVERETT,	} <i>School Committee.</i>
EZEKIEL CAPEN,	
ISAAC HORTON,	
GEO. F. SUMNER,	
JESSE FENNO,	
WM. H. LITTLE,	
J. W. WATTLES,	
GEO. E. DOWNES,	
CHAS. ELLIS,	



## Report of the Superintendent.

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GENTLEMEN OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

I have the honor to submit the following report: — You are well aware that no recent change has been made either in our school system or in the management of our schools, to materially affect their condition. During the past, as in previous years, we have had some relatively very good, and some unconditionally very poor, schools. Taken together, however, I believe they would compare favorably with those in adjoining towns. For the last four months they have been more than usually successful. They can not change greatly one year with another, unless some improvement is made in our school system. Your statistics show that for several years past the per cent. of attendance has varied but very little. The salaries of the teachers average about four dollars per month higher than in 1866, but the increased efficiency which might have been expected from this small advance, is more than offset by the increased number of scholars. There were then 754 persons of legal school age in Canton, now there are over 900, and only two more teachers are employed. The character of our population is the same, and there has been no variation in the length of our schools for the last five years. In particular districts the schools may be better or worse, but I know of no reason why their general condition should have changed greatly from previous years.

During the past year four teachers have been employed who absolutely failed, either to govern their schools or to teach their

pupils. No one of them is now employed in town, and further comments are unnecessary. The school in district No. 2, under the instruction of Miss Ellen McKendry, has perhaps shown the most striking improvement. The primary department in No. 1, the second and third primary in No. 3, and both departments in No. 6, are very good schools in every respect. The intermediate department in No. 3, is under the care of an excellent and faithful teacher, and the grammar department in No. 1, particularly deserves commendation. It is needless to particularize farther. In those schools mentioned above, the same teachers, with one exception, have been employed for several years. In those schools to which I have not called special attention, the present teachers have been employed for a shorter time. Most of our teachers have manifested no lack of interest, or of earnest effort, to improve and elevate their schools. One of our best teachers, in No. 3, resigned during the year to accept a more lucrative situation, and I fear some others contemplate following her example.

The High School is, I believe, fully answering the anticipations of its friends and meeting the wants of the town. It has now been so long established, and its usefulness is so well recognized, that special remarks are not called for. To keep the standard advanced we must improve the lower schools, for they are the fountains from which this school is supplied. The course of study indicated by the committee has been followed, nearly every pupil preferring the classical course. Upon the admission of the fourth class at the commencement of the second term, Miss Lydia J. Pearce was engaged as assistant, and has proved herself a very competent teacher. I believe the time will come when not only our High Schools, but our highest educational institutions, will be sustained at the public expense, and open to all who possess the necessary qualifications and a desire to enter them.

During the last term drawing was introduced into all the schools, but the event is so recent that it is impossible to tell from our experience what the result will be. I am inclined to think however, that if it is necessary to teach drawing, some

one should be specially employed for that purpose who is a master of the art. Many of our schools are large, and they already necessitate the teaching by one person of too many branches, in all of which he cannot be proficient.

The matter of grading has received attention. Our schools however, differ so much in many respects that no single course of studies can be adopted which will meet the wants of all. In two districts there are a primary and a grammar department; in one district a primary and an intermediate department; in another five primary, an intermediate and a grammar department; all the other districts have mixed schools. An attempt has been made to establish a grade, as nearly uniform as possible, to meet the average ability of the children, so that no scholar need be retarded by the teacher's attempt to keep his class together, which is often done to the injury of the majority of his school.

The subject of Evening Schools has been brought practically before the public for only a few years, yet so evident is the need of them, and so patent the good derived from them, especially in towns like our own, that since the system commenced, the number of towns making appropriation therefor has increased rapidly, almost in geometrical progression. I am glad to say that this town was so well satisfied with the result of the evening schools last year, as to make the same appropriation this year, which was a wise and profitable investment. A system of affairs wherein children are obliged to obtain a little education from evening schools or remain in ignorance, is not right, neither is that whereby we are flooded with a tide of illiterate adults; but as we can not strike at the root of the evil, we must do the best we can to provide a remedy for it. For the past year our evening schools have been faithfully conducted, and have met with a good degree of success, which has been somewhat retarded by the necessarily imperfect classification, causing a demand for more teachers, and also by irregularity of attendance.

One great fault in nearly all our schools is, that the teachers place too much dependence upon their text-books. Having in

many instances been taught from books alone, they know only how to teach from books. The true text-book is the living voice of the teacher. The making and vending of school books has degenerated, till it has become a branch of trade but little elevated in character above the making and vending of quack medicine. Reform must come from the teacher. Books are poor attempts to make up for his inability to be his own text-book.

There are many unnecessary complications in our arithmetics. Our geographies and histories are filled with many useless details; and it would not be a bad plan to substitute for some of the dreary technicalities of grammar the practice of the art of "speaking and writing the English language correctly." Pupils often have a dislike for the study of grammar, which is not greatly to be wondered at. They learn definitions and formulas, and are made to repeat rules, but they might as well, in many instances, spend so many hours in committing to memory a table of logarithms as for any good they receive. Take this quotation for example, from the "First Lessons in Grammar" where the "plan, definitions, observations and exercises, are in the simplest style, and suited to the capacity of children." "A chief idea sometimes displays itself in the changes which it causes in a certain class of words. When this occurs the idea becomes a grammatical property. Hence *time* afford us the *tenses*." Who wonders that a child is not charmed with the study of grammar? The different parts of speech should be explained until they can be classified by their respective relations, and the pupil should not be expected to parse by definitions and dictionaries until he is master of a more simple method. He should have presented a practical application of the rules of grammar, and this would do much to explain the advantage of a thorough acquaintance with its principles. The older scholars too, are often kept in a course of dry abstractions, in which they are apt to forget what they have learned, and are not preparing for what they will learn by and by. The prevalent idea seems to be, that a teacher must *hear* lessons only, and one of the results is a cramming of the memory at the expense of the higher faculties, when a popular school should be the very opposite.



I wish to call your attention to the small appropriations made by the town for the support of schools. Compared with other towns in this county last year, Canton was below the average in the amount raised for the support of schools, according to its per centage of taxable property,—eight towns having raised less and fourteen more. Compared according to the amount raised per scholar, nine towns raised less and thirteen more. In three towns at least, where the amount raised per scholar is less, there is no public high school, which would bring Canton comparatively still lower in the scale. The amount appropriated in this town, according to the per centage of taxable property was, \$003.17, the amount per scholar \$7.88.3. The average wages paid our female teachers last year,—\$29.00 per month,—was the lowest in the county with one exception,—the average for the county being \$36.03. It is from this fact that our best teachers are residents of this town. It costs them less to live at home than it would to board elsewhere, and hence their pay is really more than a stranger would receive for the same labor. As a general rule a high salary will command better ability and more experience than low wages. If we desire the best instructors, and what is equally important, if we wish to retain their continued services, we must offer the same inducements as other towns, or we shall find our neighbors improving at our expense.

The attendance the past year has been poor, and truancy has been of frequent occurrence. It is to be hoped that the by-laws to be presented at the annual town meeting will be adopted, and means provided to check this evil.

Many of our schools are too large, especially the primary departments, which are really of more importance than those of a higher grade, and should receive careful and earnest attention. Some of our teachers are entrusted with the daily care and education of sixty or seventy little children, every one of whom requires personal instruction. Under these circumstances but little can be expected. The only education a great part of our population ever receive is in these schools. The number of those who never pass beyond their precincts is three

times as many as those who finish their course in the grammar schools.

The subject of ventilating our school rooms deserves more attention than it has received. The air in most of them, a short time after a session commences, is close and poisonous. The greater part of them are ventilated according to the old theory, by making a small hole somewhere near the ceiling, but no provision is made for a supply of fresh air. A writer in the Report of the Mass. State Board of Health says that fifteen cubic feet of fresh air per minute is required for each child. We have no school room in town so constructed that one-tenth of that amount can be supplied without opening the windows. I believe that the coughs, colds, and sickness so prevalent among the scholars during the winter months are owing, to a considerable extent to being confined in our ill-ventilated school rooms.

In the foregoing report I have endeavored briefly to give you an account of the general condition of our schools, without attempting to point out the merits or demerits of each, that would lead to needless repetition, and I can not see how the cause of education in Canton would be benefited thereby. The success of our schools does not depend on the criticisms of certain persons, but it does depend on the interest felt in them by an intelligent community, a liberal appropriation of money and the employing of none but competent teachers.

Respectfully submitted,

T. E. GROVER,

SUP'T OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

*Canton, March 4, 1872.*

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At a meeting of the School Committee of Canton, held March 18, 1872, the foregoing reports were presented and adopted as the Annual Report of the School Committee.

*Attest,* W. H. LITTLE, SECRETARY.



## STATISTICS OF SCHOOLS.

SUB COMMITTEES.		Districts	Grade of School.	No. in School 1st Term*	Average Attendance.	Per cent. of Attend'ce.	No. in School 2d Term†	Average Attendance.	Per cent. of Attend'ce.	Over 15	Under 5	Length of School in months.	Amount of money paid for Teaching.	Amount paid for fuel and care of rooms.	Amount paid for repairs and incidentals.
GEORGE F. SUMNER.	}	1	Gram.	47	37	.79	45	34	.75	6	1	9½	\$570 00	\$143 00	\$238 89
		2	Prim.	40	30	.75	41	30	.75		2	9½	304 00		
ISAAC HORTON.	}	1	Mix'd	34	34	.77	44	28	.70		1	9½	304 00	37 53	132 63
		2	Gram.	27	19	.70	25	22½	.90			9½	702 50		
WM. H. LITTLE.	}	3	Int. P.	26	19	.73	32	26	.81	5	11	9½	318 00		
		3	1st. P.	40	30	.75	33	26	.80			9½	252 00		
}	}	3	2d. P.	39	32	.80	42	33	.80			9½	266 00		
		3	3d. P.	58	47	.80	55	41	.74			9½	259 00	473 28	224 76
}	}	3	4th. P.	57	49	.86	55	42	.76			8½	245 00		
		3	5th. P.	66	54	.81	75	45	.60			9½	222 00		
JESSE FENNO.	}	4	Mix'd	21	13	.62	21	15	.74	1		9	288 00		
		4	"	44	35	.80	42	33	.80	2		9½	304 00	43 50	37
GEO. E. DOWNES.	}	5	Gram.	43	34	.80	53	37	.70			9½	646 00	54 25	236 99
		5	"	53	45	.85	68	55	.81			9½	304 00	115 11	909 32
JOS. W. WATLES.	}	6	Prim.	42	31	.74	45	37	.82	3	2	9½	334 84		
		6	Int.	70	48	.67	60	39	.65			9½	233 00	95 80	29 70
CHARLES ELLIS.	}	7	Prim.	26	23	.88	47	45	.96	27		9½	1522 50	110 27	27 81
		7	Hign.												
J. NASON EVERETT.				743	580	.78	780	588½	.75½	46	16	158½	\$7,074.84	\$1,072 74	\$1 830 47

\* First Term, March to July. + Second Term, September to March.  
 Whole number of children May 1, 1871, between ages of 5 and 15, 895.

## EVENING SCHOOLS.

TEACHERS.	Districts.	Whole number.	Average Attendance.	Age of oldest.	Number of Sessions. *	Amount paid for Teaching. *	Other expenses.
GEORGE W. CAPEN.	1	18	9	40	44	\$110.00	\$3.90
FREDERIC ENDICOTT.	3	119	37	20	44	171.50	30.76
A. H. LOWREY, Ass't.	6	58	42	23	45	175.50	20.84
J. E. EARLE.							
E. F. FAUNCE, Ass't.							
		195	88		133	\$457.00	\$55.50

\* To April 1, 1872.



